

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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CHRISTMAS HYMN.

To-day be joy in every heart;
For, lo! the angel throng
Once more above the listening earth
Repeats the advent song.

"Peace on the earth, good will to men!"
Before us goes the star
That leads us on to holier births
And life divinest far.

Ye men of strife, forget to-day
Your harshness and your hate:
Too long ye stay the promised years
For which the nations wait.

And ye upon the tented field
Sheathe, sheathe to-day the sword:
By love, and not by might, shall come
The kingdom of the Lord.

O star of human faith and hope,
Thy light shall lead us on,
Until it fades in morning glow,
And heaven on earth is won.

—*F. L. Hosmer.*

CHRIST AND OTHER MASTERS.

"Of his fulness have all we received."—JOHN i. 16.

Of the great religions of the world, five have had no known founder. They have come up by a process of development, not

by the teaching of any one prophet or master. These five are the religions of India, of Egypt, of Greece, of Rome, and of Scandinavia. On the other hand, six religions have been founded and taught by prophets. These are: Judaism, derived from Moses; Buddhism, taught by Sakya-Muni; the ancient Persian religion, established by Zoroaster; the religion of Confucius; of Mohammed, or Islam; and Christianity.

In comparing these religions, we shall notice that the six prophetic systems of faith resemble each other in some characteristics. All are monotheisms, or inclining to monotheism. Moses, Mohammed, and Jesus taught pure monotheism. Confucius, so far as he has anything to say of the Deity, speaks only of one supreme power, which he calls "Heaven." And behind the conflict, in the system of Zoroaster, between Ormuzd and Ahriman, there is dimly seen one supreme power, Zeran-Akerane, or Infinite Time, which resolves this dualism into an ultimate monotheism. Personal religions are monotheistic, but the religions which have no human founder are polytheistic. There are multitudes of gods in Brahmanism, in the religions of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Eddas.

Moreover, the other masters resemble Jesus in teaching morality as well as religion. All of the personal religions are moral. The doctrine of Confucius inculcates morality. So does that of Zoroaster, who makes it the first command of the Deity that men shall "think right, speak right, and do right." Buddha also teaches philanthropy, charity, and benevolence; and even the system of Mohammed is based on practical obedience to the will of Allah. The Moslem is to be judged by his actions. His righteous deeds will be put in one scale, and his bad ones in the other; and, according as one or the other inclines, he goes to heaven or hell.

All these prophets, therefore, agree in teaching the worship of God and duty to man. The ancient religion of Egypt became a monotheism in its popular form by the worship of Osiris, and in that form it also inculcated a very pure morality.

So far, we find Christ and the other masters agreed in their teaching as to the fundamentals of belief and conduct.

Heathen and pagan religions tend to lift man to a higher plane. Even in the worst superstitions and idolatries there is at least this element of good: that they raise men out of sense into soul, they inculcate some principles of right, and give the power of self-control and self-denial. Jesus never claimed any monopoly of religion. He did not come to destroy, but to fulfil; not to reject, but to accept whatever the divine word had spoken to human hearts elsewhere. In this, Christianity is as old as the creation. It existed before Abraham. Its rudiments are to be found in all human minds and hearts. It was no invention or discovery of Jesus: what others had seen dimly he saw more clearly and plainly. It is the one and the same light which lightens every man who comes into the world.

If Christ and Christianity are in such sympathy with all human religions and all the aspirations of the soul, we ask wherein Jesus differed from the other masters whom I have mentioned, and wherein he was their superior. Admitting and gladly welcoming all that is true and good in the words of other great teachers, is there any reason to say that Jesus has carried mankind up to a still higher level?

Let me first call your attention to what seems to have especially impressed the early disciples, which they expressed by the word "fulness." John, in our text, says of Christ, "Of his fulness have all we received." Paul speaks of our "all coming to the stature of a perfect man, unto the measure of the fulness of Christ"; and in another place he says of Jesus "that it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." By this fulness they intend the rounded and entire union in Christ's teaching of that which had been before made separate. What men had put asunder he joined together. He united piety and morality,—love to God and love to man. Brahmanism emphasizes spirit and the things unseen and

eternal as strongly as Jesus did. But it has omitted humanity, and in its system of castes has denied human brotherhood. Buddhism, a revolt from Brahmanism, destroyed the caste system, taught human brotherhood, and made philanthropy and charity the highest duties. In doing this, it lost its hold on the spiritual world, and left the heavens empty of any divine Providence or divine inspiration. But Jesus, who spent whole nights in prayer, spent long days in doing good. You cannot say whether God or man were nearer to that large heart. He declared the divine and human love to be corresponding and related sentiments of the soul. In Jesus, mind and hand were equally in harmony. The profoundest thought went out at once to some practical application. He declared himself to be the Messiah,—the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and yet he washed the feet of his disciples, talked on equal terms with publicans, Samaritans, and Romans, and had for his companions and friends humble fishermen and untaught country people. He declared that there was given to him all power in heaven and earth, and that he had power from God to forgive sin, yet said that he could do nothing of himself, that his doctrine was not his own, and refused to be called good, because only God is really and absolutely good.

Another fact which we notice in the teaching and life of Jesus is that both are instinct with a living hope, and this became a spring of progress. The New Testament writers lay much stress on this fact. "We are new-born into a living hope," says Peter. "Against hope we believe in hope"; "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God"; "we keep the full assurance of hope to the end"; "we are saved by hope"; "we have the patience of hope"; "our hope is laid up in heaven."

And this hope came from the heart of Jesus. It came to him from his deep faith in God as his Father. It appears in the prayer we offer every day, when we ask that God's kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Who among the sons of men, except Jesus, ever had such a far-reaching vision? He looked forward to the time beyond the most inspired prophetic hope, not only when war should cease, and the knowledge of God fill

the earth as the waters cover the sea, not only when the Gentiles should come to the light, and all flesh should see and know the Lord, but also when heaven and earth should be one, when all souls should find rest in God, when every knee shall bow before the divine love, and all human hearts be purified from sin. "I in them, and thou in me, that we may be all perfectly one." The words of Jesus, which no one could have invented, since none but he had the thought, show that he looked forward to this universal salvation,—salvation from evil, for all souls, in every place and all time.

And all this vast and world-uniting movement came from one profound soul, filled with the divine presence, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead. That which makes the impassable gulf between Jesus and the other great teachers of mankind is his entire confidence in God as his father and friend. No one else among the masters of human thought has shared it with him. Neither Socrates nor Confucius, neither Buddha nor Plato, neither Zoroaster nor Moses, ever said, "I and my father are one"; "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee"; "thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world"; "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, nor the Father but the Son." It was this perfect union of his heart, mind, will, with the heart, mind, and will of God which has made of Jesus the incomparable leader of the human race. Deeper than mortal thought ever sounded, he went down into the depths of the infinite mind: higher than human aspiration ever soared on wing of poet or prophet, he went up into the living glories of the upper world. This was "the length and breadth and depth and height" of the love of God in the soul of Jesus, which filled him with all the fulness of God.

And of this fulness we have all received. This is the culminating and surpassing wonder. The experience of Jesus has become the experience of his humblest disciple. Through him we all have access by one spirit to the Father. A Christian, ignorant in worldly knowledge, without worldly science, has an unction of the holy spirit, and can know all things in the kingdom of

divine truth. Our lives, no less than the life of the apostle, can be hid with Christ in God. We, also, are partakers of the divine nature. What he received, he received that he might impart it to his brethren. The poor woman, lonely and unfriended, winning her bread by hard toil, opens her Bible after her day's work is over, and she rises into the society of angels and archangels. She is bathed in a light from above: she has before her a seraphic vision. In her poor room, she is sitting in heavenly places, with the goodly company of the prophets and the noble army of martyrs, made one with God and Christ by an immortal hope.

All of these great souls were sent by God; all came to bring some help to his children; all have lifted the race to a higher elevation, taught some noble truth, and contributed to the progress of humanity. Every good gift is from above. But we can, as each year brings round this Christmas season, rejoice that God sent, in the fulness of time, that eldest Son, our elder brother, who has gifts for all mankind,—for childhood and age, for poverty and wealth, for ignorance and knowledge. We can rejoice in his hope for mankind, be happy in his brotherly love, be led by him to his Father and our Father, to his God and to our God, and join in the angels' song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."

James Freeman Clarke.

[For want of space a page or two of this sermon was omitted. Any one who desires to receive the whole sermon in pamphlet form may address, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.]

THE STILL HOUR.

The time draws near the birth of Christ:

The moon is hid; the night is still;

The Christmas bells from hill to hill

Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,

From far and near, on mead and moor,

Swell out and fail, as if a door

Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,

That now dilate, and now decrease,

Peace and good will, good will and peace,

Peace and good will, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
 I almost wished no more to wake,
 And that my hold on life would break
 Before I heard those bells again.

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;
 A rainy cloud possessed the earth,
 And sadly fell our Christmas Eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gambolled, making vain pretence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We ceased: a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us: surely rest is meet:
 "They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet,"
 And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
 Once more we sang: "They do not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
 Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gathered power, yet the same,
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
 O Father, touch the east, and light
 The light that shone when hope was born.

—Tennyson.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Glory be to Thee in the highest heavens,
 O thou God of our salvation. Thou hast
 proclaimed peace on earth and infinite
 good will to men. Unto us has been born a
 guide and deliverer. Glad tidings from
 heaven he brought, and holy is the truth
 which he uttered, immortal the hope he in-
 spires. We hail the morning which com-
 memorates his birth. And to thee, his
 father and our father, his God and our God,
 we would bring our grateful acknowledg-
 ments and offer our prayers, that we may
 be more deeply impressed than ever with a
 sense of thine unspeakable grace, through
 Jesus Christ our Lord.

We adore thy providence in the advent of
 this great messenger from heaven. We ac-
 knowledge thy hand in the special gifts
 with which he was endowed, in the extraor-
 dinary power which he exercised. In thy

spirit given unto him without measure, the
 spirit of grace, of truth, and of power, what
 testimony didst thou bear to his authority!
 He came, O God, clothed not in royal pomp,
 but in the heavenly ornaments of a lowly
 and single mind; and in him and by him the
 spirit of goodness was made manifest, and
 we behold thy glory.

We praise thee that thou hast thus re-
 vealed thyself in the flesh, and that the di-
 vinity which shines through all things hath
 appeared most brightly of all, in a living
 shape, in one made in all points as we are.
 Thus art thou brought near, and we are en-
 abled to see the invisible and hold commun-
 ion with the uncreated and the everlasting.
 For all that thy beloved Son did and suffered,
 for his words of truth, for his triumph over
 the powers of darkness, for his serene and
 unfaltering faith and his unfailing love, for
 his glorious death and resurrection, we
 would on this day bring thee the offerings
 of gladness and of praise.

Oh, may a sense of thine abounding good-
 ness be inscribed upon our inmost souls, by
 the influence of thy holy spirit, by the fin-
 ger of God! May our whole being be
 moulded by the truth as it was set forth in
 Jesus, and may we reflect, in some humble
 degree, the living glory which shone so
 steadily in him! Thus shall we best express
 our gratitude, when the truth lives in us, as
 it lived in him. Like him may we conquer
 the world, and acknowledge a higher law
 than the opinion of men, and yield a ready
 and implicit obedience to thy word! For
 truth and rectitude, and not for our own
 pleasure, may we hold ourselves ever ready
 to live and to die! Give unto us the spirit
 of self-sacrifice. May all that earth can
 bribe us with be as dross in comparison
 with the consciousness of fidelity to God,
 and to him only!

When we utter these petitions, well may
 we put our hands upon our lips, and our
 faces in the dust; for, alas, it has not always
 been in our hearts to do thy will. We
 have not kept steadily before our eyes our
 great model, but we have lived for the pres-
 ent moment. The vanishing trifles of the
 world have had power to amuse and en-
 gross us; and with light from heaven shin-
 ing around us, with the glorious gospel in
 our hands, we have followed our own idle
 pleasure. Save us, we beseech thee, from

our own heedlessness. Break our slumbers, and let the light of Christ search our souls and scatter our darkness. And may we know, as we have never known before, what a great thing it is to live, what a solemn work is given us to do, even to be like Christ and like God.

O Thou who art working in and through all things to fulfil the purposes of infinite wisdom, give thy holy word new power among men. Let not the Lord Jesus lie buried and forgotten. Raise him up, the conqueror of the world, and give him an everlasting empire in all hearts; and let every eye see him and every tongue confess him to be Lord, to the glory of thee, the Father. May all nations and kindreds and tongues and languages be filled with his spirit, the spirit of liberty, and be governed by his law. Let all superstition and injustice and slavery, however sanctioned by custom, disappear before that religion which came down from heaven, bringing gifts unto men. Soften all hearts. Quicken all consciences, that every form of evil may vanish, and that thy grace may abound and thy saving truth reign over all nations. And to thee shall be rendered everlasting praise. Amen.—*Furness's Family Prayers.*

THE MOTHERS' CLUB.

[Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.]

THE MOTHER AT HOME (*concluded*).

John S. C. Abbott, 1833.

Another great obstacle in the way is the want of resolution. It is always painful to a parent's feelings to deprive a child of any reasonable enjoyment or to inflict pain. Hence we are ingenious in framing apologies to relieve ourselves from this duty. Your child does wrong, and you know that he ought to be punished; but you shrink from the duty of inflicting punishment. Now of what avail is it to be acquainted with the rules of discipline, if we cannot summon resolution to enforce those rules? It will do no good to read one book and another upon the subject of education unless we are willing, with calm and steady decision, to punish our children when the occasion requires. It is this weak indul-

gence, this refusal to perform a painful duty, which has ruined thousands of families. A mother will sometimes openly remonstrate with a father for punishing a stubborn child. She will call him cruel and unfeeling, and confirm her child in his wilfulness by her sympathy and caresses.

What can be expected from such a course as this? Such a mother is the most cruel and merciless enemy which her child can have. You can do nothing more ruinous to your child, you can do nothing which will more effectually teach him to despise you, you can hardly do anything which will with more certainty bring you in sorrow and disgrace to the grave, than thus to allow maternal feelings to influence you to neglect painful but necessary acts of discipline.

I would ask the mother who reads this if she has not often been conscious of a struggle between the sense of duty and inclination. Duty has told you to punish your child: inclination has urged you to overlook its disobedience. Inclination has triumphed; and your child has retired victorious, and of course confirmed in his sin. Be assured that thus, in your own heart, lies one of your greatest obstacles to success; and, until this obstacle be surmounted, everything else will be unavailing. It would by no means be difficult to fill a volume with cases illustrative of this fact, and of the awful consequences resulting. . . .

There must be energy of character, or acts of discipline will be so inefficient as to do more harm than good. The spirit will be irritated, but not subdued. Punishment becomes a petty vexation, and its influence is most decidedly pernicious. It is of the utmost importance that, when it is inflicted, it should be serious and effectual. And it is certain that the mother who adopts prompt and decisive measures will go forward with far less trouble to herself and her child, and will, on the whole, inflict far less pain, than the one who adopts the feeble and dilatory measures which we so often see. While the one must be continually threatening and inflicting that mockery of punishment which is just enough to irritate the temper and spoil the disposition, the other will usually find her word promptly obeyed, and will very seldom find it necessary to punish at

all. . . . Real benevolence prompts to decisive measures. The mother who first coaxes, then threatens, then pretends to punish, then punishes a little, is only making trouble for herself and sorrow for her family. But, on the other hand, if she promptly meets acts of disobedience with firmness, and inflicts necessary punishment decidedly and at once, she is in the most effectual way promoting her own happiness and the best welfare of her child.

A parent is much more prone to be thus fatally indulgent if a child is of a feeble and sickly constitution. Such children are very generally spoiled. How strange, when God, in his mysterious providence, lays his hand upon some little one, and causes it to languish in weakness and in suffering, that the parent on that very account should neglect that child's welfare, and allow its passions to grow unchecked, its will to be stubborn and unsubdued! The mother, perhaps, is willing to do her duty with her more robust son. She will do all in her power to control his passions, and make him a good and happy boy. But the poor little sufferer she will indulge in all its caprices, till passion is strong and irritability is unconquerable, and the deeper sorrows of the mind are thus added to the pains and weakness of the body. Oh, how much cruelty there is in the world which goes by the false name of tenderness or love! Mother, have you a sick and suffering child? You are to that child a guardian angel, if with mild and affectionate decision you enforce your authority. Punish that child, if it be necessary to teach him habitually and promptly to obey. If you do not do this, you are the worst enemy your child can have. You are doing that which has the most direct tendency to perpetuate its feebleness and to promote its misery. And yet I know that some mothers will still say: "What, speak authoritatively, and even punish a poor little child when sick? How unfeeling!" There, there is the difficulty. Unkind to do all in your power to make your child patient and happy!

Yet let it not be supposed that austerity is recommended. This is unnecessary, and is always to be avoided. Let the tones of the voice be affectionate and soothing. Let the mother sympathize with her whole heart in the trials and sufferings of her child: let

her be ingenious in devices for its amusement; but let her not ruin her precious treasure by indulging it in peevishness or disobedience. Your child cannot possibly be happy unless taught to subdue his passions and to be obedient to your will. We would have kindness and gentleness and love ever diffusing joy through the family circle. But, if you would see your children happy and be happy yourself, you must, when your children are in sickness, as well as when they are in health, summon sufficient resolution to insure propriety of behavior and obedience to your commands.

NATURAL HISTORY.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

The Christmas Carol, sung by a chorus of fresh children's voices, is, perhaps, the most perfect expression of the spirit of Christmas-tide. Especially is this true of the old English and German carols, which seem to grow only sweeter, more mellow, more perfectly expressive of the love and good will that inspired them, as the years go by. Yet always at Christmas time there is with me the memory of one carol sweeter than all which was sung to me alone by a little minstrel, from the far north, with the wind in the pines humming a soft accompaniment.

Doubtless, many readers have sometimes seen in winter flocks of stranger birds—fluffy gray visitors, almost as large as a robin—flying about the lawns with soft whistling calls, or feeding on the ground, so tame and fearless that they barely move aside as you approach. The beak is short and thick, the back of the head and a large patch just above the tail are golden-brown, and across the wings are narrow double bars of white. All the rest is soft gray, dark above and light beneath. If you watch them on the ground, you will see that they have a curious way of moving about, like a golden-winged woodpecker in the same position. Sometimes they put one foot before the other, in a funny little attempt at a dignified walk, like the black-birds. Again they hop like a robin, but much more awkwardly, as if they were not accustomed to walking, and did not quite know how to use their feet, which is quite true.

The birds are pine grosbeaks, and are somewhat irregular winter visitors from the far north. Only when the cold is most severe, and the snow lies deep about Hudson Bay, do they leave their nesting-places to spend a few weeks in bleak New England as a winter resort. Their stay with us is short and uncertain. Long ere the first bluebird has whistled to us from the old fence rail that, if we please, spring is coming, the grosbeaks are whistling of spring, and singing their love-songs in the forests of Labrador.

A curious thing about the flocks we see in winter is that they are composed almost entirely of females. The male bird is very rare with us. You can tell him instantly by his brighter color and his beautiful crimson breast. Sometimes the flocks contain a few young males; but, until the first mating season has tipped their breast feathers with deep crimson, they are almost indistinguishable from their sober-colored companions.

This crimson breast-shield, by the way, is the family mark or coat-of-arms of the grosbeaks, just as the scarlet crest marks all the woodpeckers; and, if you ask a Micmac, deep in the woods, how the grosbeak got his shield, he may tell you a story that will interest you as did the legend of Hiawatha and the woodpecker in your childhood days.

If the old male, with his proud crimson, be rare with us, his beautiful song is still more so. Only in the deep forests, by the lonely rivers of the far north, where no human ear ever hears, does he greet the sunrise from the top of some lofty spruce. There also he pours into the ears of his sober little gray wife the sweetest love-song of the birds. It is a flood of soft warbling notes, tinkling like a brook deep under the ice, tumbling over each other in a quiet ecstasy of harmony,—mellow as the song of the hermit thrush, but much softer, as if he feared lest any should hear but her to whom he sang. Those who know the music of the rose-breasted grosbeak (not his robin-like song of spring, but the exquisitely soft warble to his brooding mate) may multiply its sweetness indefinitely, and so form an idea of what the pine grosbeak's song is like.

But sometimes he forgets himself in his

winter visit, and sings as other birds do, just because his world is bright; and then, once in a lifetime, a New England bird-lover hears him and remembers, and regrets for the rest of his life that the grosbeak's northern country life has made him so shy a visitor.

One Christmas morning a few years ago the new-fallen snow lay white and pure over all the woods and fields. It was soft and clinging as it fell on Christmas Eve. Now every old wall and fence was a carved bench of gleaming white; every post and stub had a soft white robe and a tall white hat; and every little bush and thicket was a perfect fairyland of white arches and glistening columns, and dark grottoes walled about with delicate frostwork of silver and jewels. And then the glory, dazzling beyond all words, when the sun rose and shone upon it!

Before sunrise I was out. Soon the jumping flight and cheery good-morning of a downy woodpecker led me to an old field with scattered evergreen clumps. There is no better time for a quiet peep at the birds than the morning after a snow storm, and no better place than the evergreens. If you can find them at all (which is not certain, for they have mysterious ways of disappearing before a storm), you will find them unusually quiet, and willing to bear your scrutiny indifferently instead of flying off into deeper coverts.

I had scarcely crossed the wall when I stopped at hearing a new bird-song so amazingly sweet that it could only be a Christmas message, yet so out of place that the listener stood doubting whether his ears were playing him false, wondering whether the music or the landscape would not suddenly vanish as an unreal thing. The song was continuous,—a soft, melodious warble, full of sweetness and suggestion, but suggestion of June meadows and a summer sunrise, rather than of snow-packed evergreens and Christmas-tide. To add to the unreality, no ear could tell where the song came from: its own muffled quality disguised the source perfectly. I searched the trees in front: there was no bird there. I looked behind: there was no place for a bird to sing. I remembered the redstart, how he calls sometimes from among the rocks and refuses to show himself, and

runs and hides when you look for him. I searched the wall, but not a bird track marked the snow. All the while the wonderful carol went on, now in the air, now close beside me, growing more and more bewildering as I listened. It took me a good half hour to locate the sound: then I understood.

Near me was a solitary fir-tree with a bushy top. The bird, whoever he was, had gone to sleep up there, close against the trunk, as birds do, for protection. During the night the soft snow gathered thicker and thicker upon the flexible branches. Their tops bent with the weight till they touched the trunk below, forming a green bower, about which the snow packed all night long, till it was completely closed in. The bird was a prisoner inside, and singing as the morning sun shone in through the walls of his prison-house.

As I listened, delighted with the carol and the minstrel's novel situation, a mass of snow, loosened by the sun, slid from the snow bower, and a pine grosbeak appeared in the doorway. A moment he seemed to look about curiously over the new, white, beautiful world; then he hopped to the top-most twig, and, turning his crimson breast to the sunrise, poured out his morning song, no longer muffled, but sweet and clear as a wood-thrush bell ringing the sunset.

Once, long afterward, I heard his softer love-song, and found his nest in the heart of a New Brunswick forest. Till then it was not known that he ever built south of Labrador. But even that, and the joy of discovery, lacked the charm of this rare sweet carol, coming all unsought and unexpected, as good things do, while our own birds were spending the Christmas time and singing the sunrise in Florida.—*William J. Long, "Ways of Wood Folk."*

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[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

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"First Steps in Numbers"; Franklin's Elementary Arithmetic"; Bradbury-Eaton's "Elementary Arithmetic"; Colburn's "Sequel"; "Geometry for Beginners," Hill; "Plane and Solid Geometry," Peirce; "Treatise on Elementary Geometry," Chauvenet; "Grammar School Spelling Book"; Brown's "Grammar"; Quackenbos's "Grammar"; Blair's "Rhetoric"; "Fourth Class Reader," Hillard's; Sheldon's "Fourth Reader"; Hillard's "Intermediate Reader"; Hillard's "Second Class Reader"; "First Class Reader"; Sargent's "Standard Speaker"; "Elements of Logic," Whately; "English Literature of the Nineteenth Century," Cleveland; "Physiology and Hygiene," Dalton; "Philosophy of Natural History"; "Elements of Physics"; "Earth and Man," Guyot; "Young Folks' History of the United States," Higginson; "History of Civilization," Guizot; "Epicetus"; "Primer History of Rome"; "Peter the Great," Motley; "Conspiracy of Catiline" (in Latin); "First Lessons in Latin"; "Map of Athens"; "German School Atlas"; "Large Folding Map of Asia Minor"; Warren's "Common School Geography"; Butler's "Elementary Geography"; "Elementary Geography"; "Folding Map of Upper Canada."

Miscellaneous.

Mill's "Political Economy"; Later Roman Commonwealth," Arnold; "Man and Nature," Marsh; "Memoir of Anna Jameson"; "High-caste Hindu Woman," Ramma Bay; "Literary Landmarks of London"; "Universal Progress," Spencer; "Brassey's Life and Labors," Helps; "Theology in the English Poets," Brooke; "Ethics of George Eliot"; "Roman Imperialism," Seeley; "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," Shairp; "Euthanasia, or Happy Talks toward the End of Life"; "Legend of Montrose," Walter Scott; "Beaten Paths, or a Woman's Vacation," Thompson; "Ultima Thule," poems by Longfellow (pocket edition); "Rhodora, Journal of the New England Botanical Club," vols. i, ii, iii.

French.

"Corinne," Madame de Staël; "Histoire de France"; "First French Course," Char-denal; "Le Cid," Corneille; "Charles II.," par Voltaire; Robertson's "Intermediate French"; Otto's "French Conversation Grammar"; "Histoire Romaine," Drury.

Music.

Six odd pieces of music; "Carmina Sacra," Lowell Mason; "Vade Mecum"; bound volume of "Old Songs and Dance Music."

The following books are offered by the Orange branch. Address Miss C. O. Schetter, 75 Highland Avenue, Orange, New Jersey:—

"The Heart of the Ancient Wood," Roberts; "The Coming Race," Lord Lytton; "Ships that pass in the Night," Harraden; "Elements of Written Arithmetic," Charles Davies; "Thoughts from Marcus Aurelius Antoninus"; "Kaiser Wilhelm" (German), Dr. Gottlob Egelhaaf; "The Schoolmaster," Roger Ascham; "The Wisdom of the Ancients and New Atlantis," Francis Bacon; "Battle of the Books," Jonathan Swift; Johnson's "Lives of the Poets"; "The Diary of Samuel Pepys"; "Crito and Phædo," Plato; Gray's "School and Field Book of Botany"; "An Academic Physiology and Hygiene."

Books offered by Marlboro Branch. Address Miss Della M. Frye, Pleasant Street, Marlboro, Mass.

Educational.

"Geography," Primary and Advanced; "Physical Geography," Geikie; "Chemistry," Miller; "Natural Philosophy," Quackenbos; "History of the United States"; "General History"; Dictionary; "Arithmetics" and "English Grammars" by various authors; "Geometry"; "Book-keeping"; "Hydraulics and Mechanics," Ewbank; "Readers," Grades I., II., III., IV., V., VI.; French and German text-books; "Easy Latin Method," Harkness; "Poems," by Burns, Schiller, Moore; "Notes on the Gospels," Barnes; "Daily Readings"; "Sermons," Benjamin Andrews; Revised New Testament; Tyler's "England"; Keightley's "England"; "History of Napoleon"; "Life of Washington," Sparks; "Life of Washington," Ban-

croft; "Life of James G. Blaine"; "Life of Charles H. Spurgeon"; "Stories of Famous Women"; "Moral Stories for Children"; "Stories for Young Children"; "The War Tiger," Dalton; "Regeneration," Sears; "History of the Plague in London"; "History of the Boston Fire"; "History of Our Own Times," Justin McCarthy; Hallam's "Middle Ages"; Guide-books to France, Italy, and California; "Letters from Abroad"; "The Vale of Cedars"; "Home Life," Ware; "Swiss Family Robinson"; "Hard Tack and Coffee," Billings; "Story of Andersonville Prison"; Hymn-books; sheet music, (difficult).

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send requests, offers, or letters of thanks to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

Mrs. F. C. Briley and Mrs. S. K. Harris, of Polkton, North Carolina, would be glad to have any reading. They both have children who need and would make good use of any books sent them.

Mrs. Gabe Nelson, Nettle Ridge, Virginia, asks for Johnson's "Fifth Reader," a primer, one primary and two intermediate spelling-books.

Youth's Companion is asked for by Mrs. O. G. Bailey, Pedlar Mills, Virginia.

Mrs. C. Atkinson, Olive Branch, North Carolina, asks for reading suitable for herself and two children, six and seven years of age.

I wish to thank those that have sent me reading matter this summer, and ask to be remembered this winter. My children are

all at home again, and I would so much like to have some good books for them. We are a large family, and all enjoy reading. There are a great many Indian children here that I could pass reading on to, and some that cannot afford to buy. With kind wishes to all the Cheerful Letter friends. Mrs. A. M. Chitwood, Atoka, Indian Territory.

Mrs. J. J. Watts, Pleasant View, Virginia, asks for Johnson's "Fourth Reader" and magazines.

Mrs. S. L. George, Eggtown, North Carolina, a cripple, will be very glad of any good reading.

My grandmother, Mrs. Mary S. Brown, has been a member of your society for several years, and now I come asking to be admitted as a member, too. I am twelve years old, and would be glad of a correspondent near my own age. I would also be real glad if some one would send me reading and clippings and pictures for my scrapbook. I am especially fond of fairy tales and poetry. I will be grateful for anything sent me, and will share with my little friends. Miss Pearl L. Brown, Vinton, Virginia.

Mrs. S. A. Smith writes: "I am greatly interested in Mrs. Myrtle Davidson and her six little children. They are living far from school, and their nearest town nine miles away. The oldest girl, ten years of age, can read and write. They are renters, and live in a locality where good literature is hard to obtain, even if they had the means to buy with. Will the members send them reading matter? Address Mrs. Myrtle Davidson, Woodburn, Clark County, Iowa, R. F. D., No. 1."

"And I know an orphan girl, ten years old, a very bright child,—her mother died at her birth,—and a poor woman who was once a teacher *took* and is doing what she can to educate her. Please send to Miss Jessie Anderson, in care of Mrs. Laretta Bradford, Liberty Centre, Warren County, Iowa."

First Spelling Book is asked for by Mrs. M. N. Coleman, Dobyn, Virginia.

Mrs. T. A. Gregory, Swansonville, Virginia, asks for Wells's "Essentials of Algebra."

Current numbers of *Harper's Bazar* and

Household are asked for by Mrs. L. A. Thomson, Elko, South Carolina.

Mrs. C. B. Merrick, East Hampstead, New Hampshire, asks for simple music for her little girl, also reading suitable for young children.

Mrs. R. A. McCabe, Nettle Ridge, Virginia, asks for "Queechy" and "St. Elmo."

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

I.

Buried Birds.

1. I once put up with a host rich in goodness as well as in abundance.
2. How much awkwardness some people show!
3. How can a rye field be made most productive?
4. Casper rowed his boat across the river in ten minutes.
5. The great Mogul lives in Delhi.
6. Pigs wallow in mire, and like it.
7. This will do very well for a starter.

II.

Crossword Enigma.

My first is in spoke, but not in hub.
 My second in pail, but not in tub.
 My third is in can, but not in will.
 My fourth is in slope, but not in hill.
 My fifth is in cry, but not in call.
 My whole is a flower beloved by all.
 (St. Nicholas.)

III.

Letter Puzzle.

A word of seven letters:—

RIO
 TA

A word of ten letters:—

T
 S.

(St. Nicholas.)

IV.

The missing words rhyme with the first missing word:—

As the king rode along on his — steed,
 an old —, who had been sitting on a —,
 waiting for him, ran forward with many a

—, and told him of her wrongs. The wind had — her gray hair into disorder, and the shawl that she had — over her shoulders was torn and ragged. Her distress as she fell — on the earth before him and the sad — in which she told her pitiful tale soon touched the king's heart. "Oh, be merciful, your Majesty!" she exclaimed; "for you only can help me, a poor — woman. I had two sons of my —, but now I have —. One has been — down by the reaper Death, and the other has been cruelly exiled to the frigid — for a crime he never committed. I have — feeble in his absence, and have worked my fingers to the — to get food; but I can do it no longer." The king's face — with pity and kindness. "You shall have gold," he said, "an ounce for every — on yonder pine-tree, and your son shall be recalled." Thankfully the woman rose from the ground on which autumn leaves were —, and exclaimed, "May blessings come to you as many in number as the birds that have — into this tree!" Then the king rode on to his palace, and ascended the — to attend to the affairs of state.

(*St. Nicholas.*)

Answers to Puzzles in November Number.

I.

Anagrams.

Astronomer, Sweetheart, Presbyterian,
Florence Nightingale.

II.

Transpositions.

Spark — park — ark.

III.

Positives and Comparatives.

1. Ham, Hammer.
2. Add, Adder
3. Mast, Master.
4. Set, Setter.

IV.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Turkey. | 7. Sable. |
| 2. Cork. | 8. Ulster. |
| 3. Jersey. | 9. Bismarck. |
| 4. Oil. | 10. Shanghai. |
| 5. Cologne. | 11. Atlas. |
| 6. Leghorn. | 12. Mosquito. |

A CHRISTMAS WISH.

It is a little child that you, and thousands like you all over the earth, are remembering to-day,— a little child who grew to be the man he was, to be loved and honored and tenderly and gratefully remembered still, so many years after he died, and in countries of which he had never heard, just because he kept always in his heart the love of God our Father and the love of men, even his enemies, and loved Truth and Right and Goodness so much that he was willing to die rather than be false to them.

I can wish you no better wish than that you may try to be all that you believe the Child Jesus to have been.

Your affectionate friend,
SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God and of good-will to man!

Hark! joining in chorus,

The heavens bend o'er us!

The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun.

A CHRISTMAS CARMEN.

And found, at last, the mystic Graal I see,
Brimmed with His blessing, pass from lip to lip
In sacred pledge of human fellowship;
And over all the songs of angels hear,—
Songs of the love that casteth out all fear,—
Songs of the Gospel of Humanity!

ON A PRAYER-BOOK.

Will any one who would like a barrel of good reading, and is willing to pay freight charge, please address Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God, to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed,—it is a work for a god.—*Carlyle.*

Love alone makes the heart rise to know the secret of all being. . . . Failing in this knowledge, man may know many things, but nothing truly; for all such knowledge stays with outward shows.—*Henry Jones, M.A.*

The measure of manhood is the degree of skill attained in the art of carrying one's self so as to pour forth upon men all the inspirations of love and hope and to evoke good even from the meanest and wickedest of mankind.—*W. D. Hillis.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER
EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, Box 91, South Framingham, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, December 5, at 25 Beacon Street, at 10.30 A.M. All persons interested are cordially invited.

Please notice the change of address of our secretary, Miss Langmaid, to 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass. All who desire correspondents are reminded to write directly to Miss Langmaid.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden St., Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.